

October 28, 1999

Bay-Delta Advisory Council

Dear Council Members:

We are at a critical juncture in the CALFED process where decisions made relative to ecosystem restoration spending will face intensified scrutiny from elected officials in Washington and concerned stakeholders in California. We commend CALFED for striving to implement a restoration decision-making process founded on the integration of science and policy. And, as individual members of the BDAC Ecosystem Roundtable, we would like to reiterate the following areas of agreement that were reached among us at the Roundtable meeting held October 13, 1999.

1. We support dedication of funds to an Ecosystem Science and Monitoring Program, especially if this will allow the Comprehensive Monitoring, Assessment and Research Program (CMARP) to move forward. However, \$8.9 million dedicated for this item, coupled with the \$5 million proposed for CALFED "special support" represents 46% of all the FY 2000 ecosystem funding. We are very concerned how Congress will view the significant amount of funds dedicated to primarily administrative actions. Although Washington has been critical of CALFED's ability to spend allocated funds, it is our responsibility to ensure that we maximize funding efficacy through investments that will yield results in the field.
2. Several screen diversion projects and other fish passage improvements were not funded last round because of the myriad of proposals submitted and relatively limited funds available through the solicitation process. We recommend that CALFED prioritize those projects that impart tangible benefits, and set aside a portion of the FY 2000 funding sufficient to cover small screen proposals. We are particularly concerned that the proposals submitted for the Pleasant Grove-Verona Mutual Water Company fish screen (the project rated highest by the Technical Panel last spring) and the Butte Creek / Sanborn Slough Bifurcation Project (a project already funded for its recently completed first phase) were not recommended for funding by CALFED staff and the interim Science Panel. Other worthy projects ready to move forward – but which did not receive funding – include the Tuttle Pump Relocation, Richter Brothers Anadromous Fish Screen Project, and DFG fish screen modifications for the Cordua and Hallwood diversions. Finally, we recommend FY 2000 funding for the \$349,000 Woodbridge Dam fish screen design-element in the Lower Mokelumne River Restoration Program.

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3. The framework for an environmental water acquisition program must be funded (\$500,000) and emphasis assigned to move this program forward, which has been a priority of the Integration Panel and the Ecosystem Roundtable for the past three years. While there is disagreement over the amount of funding and the types of programs that should be provided for actual implementation of such a program, CALFED funding for this framework development would demonstrate its commitment to realistically move forward towards meaningful environmental water transfers. At a minimum, we must determine realistic needs, program parameters and mechanics, potential sources of water, administration and assess cost / benefit / policy before actually acquiring new water. The integration of this program with CVPIA and Integrated Storage Investigation / Environmental Water Account acquisition proposals must also be done in a way that is clearly defined and understood. A total of \$3 million should be set aside - \$500,000 for development of the framework, and \$2.5 million to move forward with potential arrangements to acquire environmental water if such a framework can be completed this fiscal year.
4. We recommend that CALFED provide \$1,000,000 to address fisheries concerns in the south Delta and lower San Joaquin River region. Corrective actions in this area which affect the quality and quantity of flows will make a substantial contribution to the overall environmental health of the region and provide answers to critical ecological uncertainties. While this does not necessarily imply endorsement of the South Delta bundle it does recognize the necessity of dealing with issues in that region.
5. Independent of the Ecosystem Roundtable, \$2 million of Resources Agency funding has been directed towards CALFED watershed management proposals. The interim Science Panel and CALFED staff have selected 8 watershed projects to be funded from this source. We are concerned that hundreds of proposals were submitted last spring to compete for a limited source of funds in an open process, and that, after the fact, watershed projects were singled out with priority committed funding by CALFED. Further, an additional \$2.8 million are recommended to fund four additional watershed projects as part of the overall FY 2000 ecosystem package. These latter four watershed projects should be considered for approval alongside the other proposals competing for the set \$2 million watershed account.

In light of the above discussion, we have summarized a proposal and presented it alongside the CALFED staff / interim science panel proposal for purposes of comparison. We strongly urge that BDAC support the following stakeholder proposal and recommend its implementation to the CALFED Policy Group:

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Item	Stakeholder Proposal (\$ millions)	CALFED Proposal (\$ millions)
South Delta Improvements	1.0	0
Fish Screens	3.15	0
Lower Mokelumne ecosystem & flood control	1.1	1.1
Yolo Bypass Phase II	2.7	2.7
2000 Watershed Management	0	2.8
Agricultural Issues	0.6	0.6
Ecosystem Science & Monitoring Program	7.35	8.9
Funding for Existing Projects	3.7	3.7
Other Important Projects	3.7	3.7
CALFED Special Support	3.7	5.0
Subtotal	27.0	29.0
Environmental Water Program	3.0	1.0
Total	30.0	30.0
1999 Watershed Projects	2.0	2.0

We appreciate your consideration of this matter. We would welcome the opportunity to work with staff and the CALFED Policy Group to refine this proposal. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact any of the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Tom Clark
State Water Contractors

Dan Fults
Friant Water Users

Bill Gaines
California Waterfowl Association

Greg Gartrell
Contra Costa Water District

Walt Hoye
Metropolitan Water District
Of Southern California

Dan Keppen
Northern California Water Association

Jason Peltier
CVP Water Association

Doug Wallace
East Bay MUD